

# Tips for Busy Families



## Plan Your Meals

- ♥ Plan weekly meals based on your family's schedule.

## Use A Shopping List

- ♥ Save money and time by making only one trip to the store. Make and use a shopping list.



## Share Meal Preparation Tasks

- ♥ Teach your family how to grocery shop.
- ♥ Include your family in preparing meals and cleaning up.
- ♥ Clean up as you cook—you will have less cleanup after you finish cooking.
- ♥ Share cooking duties with other family members or neighbors. For example, your family can cook enough to share with another family.

## Cook in Advance

- ♥ Prepare some foods in advance (like spaghetti sauce). Use them for quick meals. You can add chicken or beef to the sauce and serve it over spaghetti or rice.
- ♥ Prepare parts of a meal the night before (such as: marinating chicken in the refrigerator overnight).
- ♥ Pack your lunch the night before.
- ♥ Cut and wash vegetables and make enough salad for two days. Do not add dressing until serving time.
- ♥ Cook two or three dishes on your day off and freeze part of them. Use the frozen dishes on the days when you don't have time to cook.
- ♥ Prep for recipes the night before by cutting and trimming meats
- ♥ Prepare meals in a crock pot.

## Cook Simply

- ♥ Steam vegetables and serve them without sauces.
- ♥ Use frozen chopped vegetables when possible or use rinsed canned vegetables.
- ♥ Broil, grill, bake, or roast meats.
- ♥ Make one-pot meals, like stews and casseroles. Use a crock pot.
- ♥ Use frozen or canned (rinsed) chopped vegetables (such as green beans and carrots).
- ♥ Use the microwave for cooking or defrosting.
- ♥ Learn simple recipes that can be made in less than 30 minutes.

## Use Herbs & Spices

- ♥ Chop fresh herbs and place in ice cube trays. Fill trays with water and freeze. Store the frozen cubes in a plastic bag. Use when you need fresh herbs.
- ♥ Grow cilantro, basil, or thyme on a sunny windowsill.
- ♥ Keep dried herbs on hand. One teaspoon of dried herbs is equal to 3 teaspoons of fresh herbs.

## Keep Quick Snacks on Hand

- ♥ Try these healthy snacks:
  - Fresh fruits and vegetables
  - Whole grain, ready-to-eat, dry cereal
  - Fat free and lowfat yogurt
  - Fat free and lowfat cheese
  - Baked corn tortilla chips
  - Whole grain breads

